

Romance Ends the Ancient Feud of Bourbons and Bonapartes

In the American Hospital in Paris Young Prince George de Bourbon Meets the Princess Nina Murat, Doing Service as a War Nurse--- and the Descendant of the Old French Kings Loses His Heart to the Great-Granddaughter of Napoleon's French General

PARIS, April 19. ONE of the prettiest romances of the great war has ended a century old feud and united the famous royal house of Bourbon and the equally famous Bonapartist family of Murat.

Prince George de Bourbon, a prominent young member of the great French royal house, has become engaged to Princess Nina Murat, a very charming member of the Bonapartist princely family. They met while engaged in hospital work after the war and found that they could not help loving one another in spite of the age-long enmity of their families.

Everyone knows that Napoleon Bonaparte rose to power on the ruins of the royal house of Bourbon in the French Revolution. Joachim Murat, Prince of the Empire and brother-in-law of Napoleon, was his greatest cavalry leader.

Ever since that period there has been hatred, more or less bitter, between the house of Bourbon and the distinguished families of the Napoleonic era. This feeling was especially strong in the case of the Murat family, because Joachim Murat took the crown of Naples from a branch of the Bourbons.

Never before this has a Bourbon intermarried with any of the famous Napoleonic families.

Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities Prince George de Bourbon, finding that as a member of the former royal house of France he was prescribed by law from joining the French army, became an aviation officer in the Italian army. For a time good luck was with him, and he distinguished himself by downing a number of Austrian planes, but one day, engine trouble forced him to descend within the enemy's lines and he was taken prisoner. Chance was kind to him, for the two Austrian officers who effected his capture turned out to be his cousins, sons of the Austrian Archduke Joseph. It was through the efforts of these relatives that he did not have to suffer the discomforts that were usual with prisoners.

Upon his release, after the armistice, Prince George came to Paris and entered into the service of the American Red Cross to assist in after-war reconstruction.

Fate had been preparing the stage setting for this romance for some time. About the time when Prince George commenced his flying career, the Princess Nina Murat, impelled by an irresistibly great desire to do some practical work for the men fighting, sailed from Cyprus, where her family had been living, to join some one of the women's relief organizations working behind the lines. She was readily accepted on her arrival at Marseilles, and was assigned to a large military ambulance as an "auxiliary," where she labored throughout the entire war, caring for the wounded, until the armistice gave her demobilization.

She thought of returning to Cyprus, but the war had changed her view-point of life, and she realized that a life without motive or purpose would never again satisfy her. She resisted the appeals of her family to return home. She decided to continue to enjoy her emancipation from her former life of idling and do some good in the world by becoming a real, trained professional nurse.

By chance she learned that there was a vacancy in the student nursing staff of the American Hospital in Paris. She thought that in this splendid institution maintained by Americans for Americans, one of the best equipped and best organized hospitals in Europe, she would be able to get the necessary training to do what she planned. She went to see Doctor Edmund Gros, prominent in the direction of the hospital, who was at first sceptical that a young woman of such title and high position could be serious in taking up professional nursing. But she soon convinced him, and not long after she was seen in her white cap and blue and white gingham dress, known as "Miss" or "Mademoiselle Murat," the new student nurse. She surprised everyone by the earnest enthusiasm with which she went about her rather onerous duties.

One day a new patient was received in her ward, suffering from a severe attack of tonsillitis. She was assigned to attend to him. She tucked him in his bed and placed the thermometer in his mouth in a thoroughly business-like, professional way. When her preliminary attentions had finished, she started to arrange the pillows

for his head, when the fevered lips of the young man whispered:

"What is your name, please, Mademoiselle?"

"Murat," she responded, "Mlle. Murat." The patient's eyes almost popped out of his head. He gazed at her as if she had given him the shock of his life, which was all beyond the comprehension of the nurse.

Finally he recovered self-possession enough to groan:

"Murat, Mon Dieu, Murat! Do you know what my name is? Well, it's Bourbon—George de Bourbon." And he added, laughingly: "But say, you're too nice to visit a family grudge on a sick man, aren't you?"

The princess avowed that she would do nothing worse than maintain armed neutrality, pointing out that it was a generous concession on her part, as she had him in her power! She did not need to tell this to Prince George. He knew it in more ways than one from the moment he looked well at her sympathetic face. And as the days sped on and he was becoming better under her careful attention he realized that her power over him was growing. His traditional hereditary enemy was becoming more to him than his life-long friend. And the little nurse, herself, began to show great inquietude for fear that he would be released from the hospital prematurely and suffer a relapse.

During his convalescence "Miss" Murat was assigned to take "Mr." Bourbon out for his constitutional promenades in the hospital garden, which is charmingly wooded and provided amply with cosy nooks and rustic seats. They found many things to talk about, and with their intimate knowledge of several languages, it was not difficult to camouflage whatever tenderness they desired to express to each other, without having those about them know what they were talking about. French history was entirely forgotten and ignored in their companionship—especially that which pertained to the Bourbons, Bonapartes, Murats and other possible historic bugbears to their new-found happiness.

When the prince became so well that there was no possible excuse to allow him to remain another day at the hospital, an affectionate parting occurred which came as a surprise to the attaches of the institution, who had, perhaps, been too busy to notice the romance that was developing under their very eyes.

As the gossip spread throughout the various wards of the hospital, one of the medical staff remarked: "Well, that ought to prove that we can cure anything at the American Hospital—even royal blood feuds."

And now they are to be married. Perhaps even more remarkable than the love affair of these young people is the fact that their families have forgotten their ancient feud and consented to their marriage. It is a sign of a new state of feeling after the war.

Some Frenchmen even believe that the union has great political significance, that it forecasts a union of the Royalist and Bonapartist parties who will agree upon a common candidate for king or emperor of France. To all serious-minded persons who appreciate the immense strength the French republic has shown during the last fifty years and during the

great war, this view appears ridiculous in the extreme, but still it adds interest to the romance.

The Murats are regarded as of more importance than any of the other Napoleonic families, for they have the blood of the great Emperor in their veins. Joachim Murat, the innkeeper's son, married Caroline Bonaparte, sister of the Emperor, and from this union the present members of the Murat family are descended.

Murat was entitled "Imperial Highness" by Napoleon, an honor otherwise only given to those bearing the name of Bonaparte. Then he was created King of Naples by the Emperor, the highest reward given to any of the Napoleonic marshals. Murat

helped Napoleon to win his great victories of Marengo, Austerlitz, Jena and Friedland.

He is considered by Frenchmen the greatest cavalry commander of all history.

He was accustomed to charge upon the enemy carrying only a riding whip and thus inspiring his men with such courage that they swept headlong to victory.

In taking the throne of Naples Murat dispossessed the branch of the Bourbon family, which had reigned over Naples and Sicily. By this act he added to the many causes of hatred that the Bourbons felt for Napoleon and his marshals.

When Napoleon's fortunes were falling, Murat was driven out of his Italian Kingdom. Upon the Emperor's return from

Elba, his marshal made a desperate attempt to regain possession of Naples, but he had a mere handful of men and was killed in the attempt.

It is common history that Napoleon and his marshals, most of them self-made, plebeian men, rose to power on the fall of the old Bourbon monarchy in the French Revolution. Bourbon princes and royalists regarded Napoleon as no better than the leaders of the mob that invaded the Tuileries palace, insulted King Louis XVI. and Queen Marie Antoinette and finally sent them to death by the guillotine.

There is a tradition that Napoleon, as a penniless lieutenant of artillery, looked on from his lodging house window at the in-

vasion of the Tuileries by the mob. Despising the weakness of the King who failed to stop this outrageous intrusion into his palace, the young soldier wrote in his diary:

"One day I will occupy that palace in place of the fool who sits there to-day." Throughout the Empire the Bourbons persistently intrigued against Napoleon. The Emperor added greatly to the bitterness existing between the two dynasties by seizing the most popular member of the Bourbon family, the Duc d'Enghien, on neutral territory, and causing his execution without a trial before dawn in the moat of Vincennes.

Then fortune turned the tables once more. Upon the restoration of the Bourbons to the throne in 1815, Napoleon went into exile and many of his great lieutenants faced death or ruin.

Yet again was the Napoleonic faction to regain ascendancy. In 1852 Napoleon III, nephew of the great Emperor, regained the imperial throne. He immediately invited to his court all the surviving members of the great Napoleonic families, such as the Murats, the Neys, the Berthiers and the Lannes, in order to give the right historic atmosphere to his reign.

At the same time he exiled the Bourbon princes from France and deprived them of their property.

In 1870 the Napoleonic dynasty fell again, and since then the Republic has treated both Napoleonic and Bourbon princes with impartial severity.

There is a peculiar chapter of family history behind the little Princess Nina Murat, the heroine of the present romance. When the great Murat of Napoleon's day perished he left his family homeless and in danger of persecution. His two sons, with little left to them but a famous name, were obliged to seek their own fortunes. One remained in France, and the proof that he surmounted the difficulties of his position is shown by the fact it was his luxurious home near the Place des Etats-Unis which his grandson was able to place at the disposition of President Wilson when he came to Paris to make the peace which Americans have not yet enjoyed.

The other brother decided to seek his fortune in the East and set forth from Marseilles for Constantinople in a sailing vessel which was wrecked on the rocky coast of the island of Cyprus. The prince wished to resume his voyage, but his wife refused to take any further chances on the sea and, as is often the case even in royal families, the weaker sex showed itself the stronger and won the argument. They remained in Cyprus, and it was there that their granddaughter, the Princess Nina, was born.

The branch of the Bourbon family to which Prince George belongs has been domiciled in Italy, where the young prince of the love-story came into the world.

The Prince George de Bourbon in His Italian Army Uniform.

The Picturesque American Hospital of Paris, Where the Romance Began.